

Message Text

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64

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 IO-10 SCSE-00 SCA-01 /078 W

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R 201109Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2192

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

SECDEF WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CDR JCRC NKP

CDR JCRC CP SAMAE SAN THAI

UNCLAS VIENTIANE 0430

D/PW FOR SIEVERTS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, CASC, LA

SUBJECT: AMCIT CHARLES M. DEAN

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER FROM AMBASSADOR TO FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT, SENT JANUARY 20, RELATING EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNTS OF DEAN/SHARMAN MOVEMENT TOWARD DRV/LAO BORDER.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

EXCELLENCY:

WITH REFERENCE TO MY LETTER OF JANUARY 8, 1975

AND THE STATEMENT CONCERNING THE MOVEMENT OF MESSRS.

CHARLES DEAN AND NEIL SHARMAN FROM KHAM KEUT, THROUGH

BAN NALIANG, ALLEGEDLY EN ROUTE TO SAM NEUA, I HAVE THE

HONOR TO FURNISH THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONCERNING THIS MOST UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT. THIS INFORMA-

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TION HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY APPROPRIATE LAO AUTHORITIES

AND RESULTS FROM THE DEBRIEFING OF FOUR MEN WHO WITNESSED THE MOVEMENT OF THE TWO YOUTHS.

THESE FOUR LAO MEN WERE ALL PRISONERS OF THE NEO LAO HAK SAT, AND COMPRISED TWO CIVILIANS, A FAR SOLDIER, AND A FORMER NEO LAO HAK SAT SOLDIER. THREE OF THEM WERE INCARCERATED WITH DEAN AND SHARMAN AT BAN PHOUTAN, NEAR KHAM KEUT, FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME AND ENGAGED IN CONVERSATION WITH THE TWO YOUTHS ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS. ACCORDING TO THESE PERSONS, ALL OF THE DE-TAINEES EXCEPT DEAN AND SHARMAN WERE TRANSFERRED FROM KHAM KEUT TO ANOTHER DETENTION CAMP AT BAN NALIANG ON NOVEMBER 27, 1974. ON DECEMBER 14, 1974 AT 1030 O'CLOCK

THE FOUR MEN WHO WERE THEN AT BAN NALIANG WITNESSED THE ARRIVAL OF A CARGO TRUCK AT THE DETENTION CAMP BEARING DEAN AND SHARMAN AND SEVERAL NEO LAO HAK SAT GUARDS. TWO GUARDS, THAO MAY AND THONG PHAN, LEFT THE TRUCK AND WENT TO THE OFFICE OF THE CAMP COMMANDER, THAO SOMNUK. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THONG PHAN WENT TO ONE OF THE DETENTION ROOMS AND REMOVED HANDCUFFS FROM TWO LAO PRISONERS, KHEN AND KHAMSAY. SUBSEQUENTLY, THONG PHAN RETURNED TO THE TRUCK AND THE HANDCUFFS WERE PLACED ON DEAN AND SHARMAN. THE TRUCK DEPARTED BAN NALIANG AT 1045 O'CLOCK HEADING TOWARD BAN NAPE AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM/LAO BORDER. AT THAT PLACE, ACCORDING TO NEO LAO HAK SAT GUARDS LAY AND SOUNE AND CAMP ADJUTANT PHON SAY, DEAN AND SHARMAN WERE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER VEHICLE AND TAKEN TO SAM NEUA. ON DECEMBER 15 AT 1100 O'CLOCK, THE SAME CARGO TRUCK BEARING SIX GUARDS RETURNED TO BAN NALIANG. THONG PHAN DISMOUNTED AND WENT TO THE DETENTION CELL WHERE KHEN AND KHAMSAY WERE BEING HELD AND REPLACED THE HANDCUFFS HE HAD REMOVED THE DAY BEFORE. SHORTLY THEREAFTER THE TRUCK DEPARTED TO THE WEST. THE FORMER NEO LAO HAK SAT SOLDIER STATED THAT ON OCTOBER 25, 1974, HE OVERHEARD A CONVERSATION, IN LAO, BETWEEN THE CAMP COMMANDER AT BAN PHOUTAN, THONGSAI, AND DEAN (WHO CAN CONVERSE IN SIMPLE TERMS) AND SHARMAN, DURING WHICH THE TWO YOUTHS INQUIRED IF ANY REPLY HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM SAM NEUA. IF NOT, THEY

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WANTED TO GO TO SAM NEUA IN ORDER TO EFFECT THEIR EARLY RELEASE. THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE DOUBT REGARDING THE IDENTIFICATION AND EARLIER LOCATION OF MESSRS. DEAN AND SHARMAN, OR OF THE APPARENT INTENTION OF THEIR CAPTORS TO SEND THEM TO SAM NEUA.

I CONTINUE TO BE VERY ASTONISHED THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE INFORMATION WHICH HAS BEEN PROVIDED RE-

GARDING MESSRS. DEAN AND SHARMAN, THE AUTHORITIES IN THE AREA CONTROLLED BY THE NEO LAO HAK SAT APPEAR TO BE HAVING SO MUCH DIFFICULTY IN FINDING THEM AND THAT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR RELEASE CONTINUE TO BE DELAYED FOR INEXPLICABLE REASONS.

I TRUST THAT THESE ADDITIONAL FACTS WILL FURTHER CLARIFY THE SITUATION AND RESULT IN THEIR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

(COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE.)
END TEXT.

3. PLEASE PASS FOREGOING TO HOWARD DEAN.
WHITEHOUSE

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